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NEWS FOCUS

RELEASE FRIDAY, JAN. 15, 1982

BY CORD MEYER

THE THREAT OF THE SIBERIAN PIPELINE

WASHINGTON -- THE NORMALLY SOFT-SPOKEN AND CAUTIOUS ADM. BOBBY
 INMAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE CIA, JOLTED A RECENT MEETING OF THE
 AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE. HE WARNED
 STARKLY THAT THERE WOULD BE A "TIDAL WAVE" OF PUBLIC OUTRAGE WHEN
 UPCOMING CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS REVEAL HOW THE SOVIETS HAVE BOUGHT,
 BORROWED AND STOLEN AMERICAN HIGH TECHNOLOGY TO ESTABLISH THEIR
 MILITARY ADVANTAGE.

DEFENSE SECRETARY CASPAR WEINBERGER HAS CONFESSED THIS WEEK THAT
 "OUR BUREAUCRACY WAS ASLEEP" WHILE THE RUSSIANS LEGALLY AND
 ILLEGALLY ACQUIRED THE AMERICAN TECHNICAL SECRETS NEEDED TO BUILD
 THEIR OWN ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY FOR ADVANCED WEAPONS PRODUCTION.

FINALLY DETERMINED TO CLOSE THE BARN DOOR BEFORE ALL THE HORSES ARE
 GONE, THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION IS NOW MOVING ON MANY FRONTS TO
 PROTECT REMAINING U.S. SECRET TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS. BUILDING ON THE
 MORAL REVULSION AGAINST THE SOVIET-DIRECTED CRACKDOWN IN POLAND,
 REAGAN OFFICIALS HAVE SELECTIVELY IMPOSED SANCTIONS ON RUSSIA THAT
 ARE DESIGNED TO CUT BACK SHARPLY ON FUTURE SOVIET EXPLOITATION OF
 AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY.

NOT GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD IS THE FACT THAT THE REPRESSION IN POLAND
 HAS ACTED AS A CATALYST WITHIN THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION. IT HAS
 FORCED A CLEARCUT DECISION NOT TO SELL AMERICAN OIL AND GAS
 TECHNOLOGY TO THE SOVIETS TO HELP THEM BUILD THE YANAL GAS PIPELINE
 FROM SIBERIA TO WESTERN EUROPE.

BY CANCELING THE PROPOSED SALE TO RUSSIA BY CATERPILLAR TRACTOR OF
 HEAVY PIPE-LAYING EQUIPMENT AND BY GENERAL ELECTRIC OF COMPRESSOR
 COMPONENTS, PRESIDENT REAGAN HAS DELIBERATELY THROWN A GIANT MONKEY
 WRENCH INTO WESTERN EUROPEAN PLANS TO LEND THE SOVIETS \$15 BILLION IN
 RETURN FOR ACCESS TO SIBERIAN GAS. IN THE OPINION OF THE EXPERTS,

THIS DECISION TO WITHHOLD THE SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT AND ENGINEERING SKILLS DEVELOPED FOR USE ON ALASKA'S FROZEN TUNDRA WILL CAUSE PROLONGED DELAY IN THE SIBERIAN PROJECT.

MOREOVER, REAGAN OFFICIALS HAVE SHOWN THEY HEAR BUSINESS BY WARNING OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES TO ABIDE BY THEIR COMMITMENT IN THE NATO DECLARATION "NOT TO UNDERMINE THE EFFECT OF EACH OTHER'S MEASURES." BY EMBARRASSING THE SALE OF AMERICAN OIL AND GAS TECHNOLOGY TO THE RUSSIANS AND REQUESTING THE NATO ALLIES AND JAPAN NOT TO SUBSTITUTE THEIR EQUIPMENT, REAGAN IS IN EFFECT SIGNALING HIS DETERMINATION TO DELAY THE PIPELINE EVEN IF IT RISKS A MAJOR CONFRONTATION WITH WEST GERMANY, WHICH HAS BEEN COUNTING ON THE PIPELINE NOT ONLY FOR GAS BUT FOR CONSTRUCTION JOBS AND PROFITS.

UNDER THE NIXONIAN THEORY OF DETENTE, WHICH HENRY KISSINGER USED TO ARTICULATE AND IN WHICH HELMUT SCHMIDT STILL APPARENTLY BELIEVES, WESTERN TRADE AND CREDITS TO RUSSIA WOULD ENTANGLE THE SOVIETS IN A WEB OF MUTUAL DEPENDENCY AND WOULD LEAD TO A GRADUAL RELAXATION OF TENSIONS. AS A REAGAN OFFICIAL REMARKED, "THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO GOT ENTANGLED WAS US," AND THE POLISH EVENTS ARE SEEN AS PROOF THAT THE SOVIETS WILL NOT TOLERATE EVEN MODEST REFORM. REPRESSION IN POLAND DESTROYED NOT ONLY SOLIDARITY BUT ALSO THE RATIONALE FOR THE ECONOMICS OF DETENTE.

IN THE SHADOW OF POLAND AND AFGHANISTAN, IT SEEMS SUICIDAL FOLLY FOR WESTERN EUROPE TO LEND ADDITIONAL BILLIONS TO THE SOVIETS AT LOW INTEREST RATES TO BUILD A RUSSIAN-OWNED PIPELINE THAT WILL MAKE EUROPEANS HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON SOVIET GOODWILL FOR THE PRICE AND QUANTITY OF THEIR ESSENTIAL ENERGY SUPPLIES. BUT EVEN MORE DISTURBING TO THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION THAN THE DANGER OF BLACKMAIL IS THE PIPELINE'S POTENTIAL FOR VAST SOVIET EARNINGS OF HARD CURRENCY DERIVED FROM THE SALE OF NATURAL GAS IN EUROPE.

INSTEAD OF BEING FORCED IN THE MID 1980S TO REALLOCATE RESOURCES FROM THEIR BLOATED MILITARY SECTOR TO CIVILIAN NEEDS, THE SOVIETS, IF THE PIPELINE GOES THROUGH, WILL BE ABLE TO BID HIGH IN WESTERN EUROPE FOR THE MOST ADVANCED MILITARY TECHNOLOGY. WITH EUROPEANS DEPENDENT ON A WIDE ARRAY OF CONTRACTS AND JOBS CONNECTED WITH THE PIPELINE, THE SOVIETS WILL HAVE THE FINANCIAL LEVERAGE TO BREAK ANY CONTROLS THE AMERICANS MAY HAVE NEGOTIATED ON THE TRANSFER OF SENSITIVE TECHNOLOGY.

SECRETARY WEINBERGER SPEAKS HOPEFULLY OF WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED AT THE FORTHCOMING MEETING IN PARIS OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE, THAT VOLUNTARY BODY OF NATO COUNTRIES AND JAPAN THAT WAS SET UP IN 1949 TO PREVENT THE FLOW OF HIGH TECHNOLOGY TO RUSSIA. THERE ARE IN FACT SPECIFIC AMERICAN PLANS TO BROADEN THE LIST OF TECHNOLOGIES PROHIBITED FOR SALE TO RUSSIA AND TO IMPROVE THE ENFORCEMENT OF PROCEDURES AGAINST CHEATING AND EVASION.

BUT PENTAGON OFFICIALS HAVE NO ILLUSIONS THAT ALLIED GOVERNMENTS WILL FOR LONG ABIDE BY THESE SELF-IMPOSED AND VOLUNTARY RESTRICTIONS IF A MASSIVE INTEGRATION OF THE RUSSIAN AND EUROPEAN ECONOMIES IS ALLOWED TO OCCUR IN THE FORM OF THE CURRENT PIPELINE DEAL.

SO MUCH DEPENDS ON ABILITY TO DELAY AND CUT BACK THE SIZE OF THE PIPELINE UNDERTAKING THAT THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION HAS NO TIME TO WASTE IN PROPOSING WORKABLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE EUROPEANS. U.S. ASSISTANCE TO EUROPE IN INCREASING THE AVAILABILITY OF AMERICAN COAL, OF NORWEGIAN GAS AND OF LIQUEFIED ALGERIAN GAS CAN ALL HELP TO REDUCE TO SAFE AND MANAGEABLE LEVELS EUROPEAN DEPENDENCE ON SIBERIAN GAS.

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